

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. An apparatus capable of interacting with another device,  
the apparatus comprising:

a module configured to provide a functionality,

where the apparatus is configurable to support a second  
module for providing an additional functionality in order to  
permit variable functionality by the apparatus.

2. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the functionality  
relates to an input-function.

3. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the functionality  
relates to an output-function.

4. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the functionality  
relates to an entertainment function.

5. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the functionality  
relates to an information resource.

6. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the functionality relates to a security function.

7. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the functionality relates to a system display function.

8. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the functionality relates to a system control function.

9. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the functionality relates to a telephony function.

10. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the functionality relates to a communication function.

11. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the functionality relates to a notification function.

12. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the functionality relates to a productivity function.

13. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the functionality relates to a transaction function.

14. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the functionality relates to a value-added service function.

15. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the functionality relates to a logical window for a computer.

16. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the functionality relates to education.

17. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the functionality relates to at least one of audio and visual control.

18. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the functionality relates to device control.

19. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the functionality relates to an advanced functionality.

20. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein a communication link connects another device to the apparatus.

21. The apparatus of claim 20, wherein the communication link is a wired path.

22. The apparatus of claim 20, wherein the communication link is a wireless path.

23. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the module is configured to permit removal of a functionality of the other device interacting with the apparatus, and wherein the module can provide the removed functionality from the other device.

24. The apparatus of claim 23, wherein the other device is a computer.

25. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the module comprises:  
an input stage configured to receive input; and  
an input interface coupled to the input stage and configured to process the received input.

26. The apparatus of claim 25, wherein the input interface comprises a matrix switch.

27. The apparatus of claim 25, wherein the input stage comprises an element configured for selecting a desired input.

28. The apparatus of claim 25, wherein the input stage comprises a receiver configured to receive the input.

29. The apparatus of claim 25, wherein the input stage comprises a transceiver configured to receive the input.

30. The apparatus of claim 25, wherein the input is generated by a third device.

31. The apparatus of claim 30, wherein the third device is configured to communicate with the apparatus by wireless communication.

32. The apparatus of claim 30, wherein the third device is configured to communicate with the apparatus by wired communication.

33. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the module can generate an output.

34. The apparatus of claim 33, wherein the output from the module is received and processed by a third device.

35. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the module comprises a hub.

36. The apparatus of claim 35, wherein the hub is configurable for connection to at least one peripheral device.

37. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the module comprises:  
an output stage configured to generate output; and  
an output interface coupled to the output stage and configured to process the output to be generated by the output stage.

38. The apparatus of claim 37, wherein the output stage comprises a display screen.

39. The apparatus of claim 37, wherein the output stage comprises a transmitter configured to transmit the output.

40. The apparatus of claim 37, wherein the output stage comprises a transceiver configured to transmit the output.

41. The apparatus of claim 37, wherein the output stage comprises a light-emitting element.

42. The apparatus of claim 37, wherein the output stage comprises a sound-emitting element.

43. The apparatus of claim 37, wherein the output stage comprises a motion-actuation element.

44. The apparatus of claim 37, wherein the output stage is configured to display a notification output.

45. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the module is configured to permit communication with an upstream device.

46. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the module includes a clock.

47. The apparatus of claim 46, wherein the clock permits the module to generate an event triggering signal.

48. The apparatus of claim 47, wherein the event triggering signal is configured to switch the other device from an off-state to an on-state.

49. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the module includes a processor.

50. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the module includes a storage element.

51. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the module permits an event-related content to be displayed in the apparatus.

52. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the other device receives event-related content that is generated via the module.



53. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the other device and the apparatus are connected by a network and use the Universal Plug and Play (UPnP) standard to permit the module to generate output relating to a state change of the other device.

54. The apparatus of claim 53, wherein the module can control the other device by use of the UPnP standard.

55. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the module is integrated in a compact and portable device.

56. An apparatus capable of interacting with another device, the apparatus comprising:

a module configured to provide a functionality,

where the apparatus is configurable to support a second module for providing an additional functionality in order to expand the functionality of the apparatus.

57. The apparatus of claim 56, wherein the functionality relates to an input-function.

58. The apparatus of claim 56, wherein the functionality relates to an output-function.

59. An apparatus capable of interacting with another device, the apparatus comprising:

a module configured to shift a functionality from the other device to the module,

where the apparatus is configurable to support a second module for providing an additional functionality in order to expand the functionality of the apparatus.

60. The apparatus of claim 59, wherein the functionality relates to an input-function.

61. The apparatus of claim 56, wherein the functionality relates to an output-function.

62. An apparatus capable of interacting with another device, the apparatus comprising:

means for providing a functionality,

where the apparatus is configurable to support a second means for providing an additional functionality in order to expand the functionality of the apparatus.

63. A method of manufacturing a variable-function device, the method comprising:

providing a module configured to provide a functionality,

where the variable-function device is configurable to support a second module for providing an additional functionality.

64. The method of claim 63, further comprising:

providing a second module for providing an additional functionality in order to expand the functionality of the variable-function device.

65. A method of providing functionality in a variable-function device, the method comprising:

removing a functionality from another device that can communicate with the variable-function device; and

providing the removed functionality in the variable-function device.

66. An article of manufacture, comprising:

a machine-readable medium having stored thereon  
instructions to:

remove a functionality from another device that can  
communicate with a variable-function device; and

provide the removed functionality in the variable-  
function device.

67. An apparatus capable of interacting with another device,  
the apparatus comprising:

a module configured to provide a functionality;

where the apparatus are connected by a network and use a  
Universal Plug and Play (UPnP) standard to permit the module  
to generate output relating to a state change of the another  
device connected to the network.

68. The apparatus of claim 67, wherein the module can control  
the another device by use of the UPnP standard.

69. A method of providing functionality in a variable-  
function device, the method comprising:

detecting for an event;

in response to a detected event, generating an event-related content via a variable-function device.

70. The method of claim 69 wherein the detected event is compared with a pre-determined set of events.

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